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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
Federal Extension Service
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Outline

DEVELOPING RURAL COMMUNITY RESOURCES ^{1/}

One hears and reads a good deal these days about natural resources, such as biological and physical sciences, and economic resources such as property and finances. But you people in the program of this conference today are recognizing another type of resource - HUMAN RESOURCES. Human resources are fully as important as the other types in the progress of a nation, a community, or of any particular program, such as your program in civil defense. I am sure that you people of military training and experience would fully appreciate the importance of human resources in public welfare and success of programs.

Consideration of human resources involves two main things: Understanding them, and skills in working with them. You notice I have not said, "knowing" and "using" human resources, but rather understanding and working with them, because the difference between "knowing" and "understanding" and between "using" and "working with" are tremendously important. Another principle, too, is that generally contacts are basically successful to about the same extent that they ultimately involve the local level and the volunteer or lay leadership rather than ending with the professional workers in the public agencies. However, the latter can help you contact and encourage the local leadership.

Our main task this session is to look at human resources in more detail, with particular reference to those of organizational kind and those common to rural areas or sections beyond large cities.

^{1/} Prepared by E. J. Niederfrank, Extension Rural Sociologist, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, for Second Annual Community Leadership Seminar, Continental Air Defense Command, Colorado Springs, Colo. June 20-25, 1955.

I. What Human Resources are Found in Rural Communities?

A. Voluntary Organizations. Principal types:

Farm Bureau	Health and welfare associations -
Farmers Union	Red Cross, Cancer, Heart, Polio, etc.
Grange	Commercial groups - Chamber of Commerce
Agricultural Co-ops	Service and fraternal groups - American Legion, VFW, Odd Fellow, Elks, Masonic Orders, Knights of Columbus, Kiwanis, Rotary, Women's Club, Garden Club
REA co-ops	
Churches	
Parent-Teachers Associations	Community councils, improvement clubs

B. Public Agencies and Related Groups - Primarily of county or local scope. Principal types:

1. Agricultural Extension Service. Entirely educational; indirectly connected with USDA through State agricultural colleges, which assume major responsibility for administration and conduct of programs.
 - a. Home Demonstration Councils and local groups.
 - b. 4-H Clubs and YMW Groups.
 - c. Farm leaders and commodity groups.
 - d. County extension advisory councils or planning committees.
2. Soil Conservation Service. Directly connected with USDA.
 - a. County office with one or more paid technicians.
 - b. Soil conservation districts with elected supervisors.
3. Commodity Stabilization Service. Production adjustments and price programs. Directly connected with USDA.
 - a. County office with paid executive director or secretary.
 - b. County and community committeemen.
4. Farm Credit Administration. Real estate and production credit for eligible farmers. Directly connected with USDA.
 - a. Production credit associations - county or small district basis.
 - b. Farm real estate loan associations.

Both of the above function as self supporting cooperatives. Both also have one or more fieldmen plus offices and boards of directors elected from borrowers and advisors.

5. Farmers Home Administration. Real estate and production credit for "disadvantaged" farmers not able to obtain suitable credit elsewhere. Directly connected with USDA.
 - a. County or small district office with one or more paid personnel.
 - b. County advisory committee.
6. School systems. Indirectly connected with State departments of public instruction. FFA Clubs in schools teaching vocational agriculture.
 - a. County superintendent.
 - b. Local school district, with principals or superintendents.
7. County welfare department, usually one or more paid personnel. Partially connected with State welfare departments.
8. County public health units. Partially connected with State health departments.
 - a. County health officer - in many cases is only a local physician serving part time. An increasing number of counties now have or are obtaining full-scale public health units with two or more paid personnel.

C. Individual Leaders and Key Persons. Examples of principal types:

Banker	Minister or priest
Farm supply dealer	School principal
Storekeeper	Other key personages having direct or indirect influence
Retired farmer	

II. State Organizations a Main Channel to Local Leadership

By now undoubtedly the above list looks to you like a formidable number of contacts to make but you multiply your contacts by starting with State organizations.

Most local organizations and agencies today have strong relations with some kind of a State and national setup. And very often local groups look to their State counterparts for leadership and assistance. In fact, this is commonly referred to as a major community problem today - too many groups, most of which are interested in programs of special interest nature that come down from the top, while local overall community problems fall through the slats because "everybody's business is nobody's business."

The point is that if you wish to work on civil defense through local resources you will find it most desirable to approach them through their respective State organizations or leadership. This is a "natural" and accepted procedure in organizational work today.

III. Principal State Organizations Serving Rural People

Most of the local organizations and agencies listed above have their respective State organizations. The relationship between their local, State, and national offices varies among the different groups. However, in general, the local groups like to feel a certain independence, but at the same time State leadership is accepted and desired. Suggestions from State offices usually carry weight. Moreover, in most cases the programs of locals usually follow the general patterns and suggestions of respective State and national offices, and the way to become a part of a local program on a more or less widespread State basis is to make the approach through the State offices. Acceptance there is then developed and channeled to the locals, according to their respective planning and communicative procedures.

We will now turn to a list of various State organizations which I believe would be of most concern to you, with a short description of each and the names and addresses of their head persons by States. (List attached.)

IV. Some Rules for Working with State Farm Organizations and Agencies

Below are some suggestions that may be helpful in contacting State offices of various organizations and agencies. They are general in nature, but basic. You will want to vary your approaches depending upon the group or agency being contacted and on other circumstances.

Some suggested rules and principles are as follows:

1. Be selective. Undoubtedly you will prefer to work on an intensive basis in your civil defense program with only 1 or 2 organizations, but you may like to have 3 or 4 other groups know about your program. Some of them perhaps would be glad to include you as a speaker at their annual meeting or mention your program in their respective house organs. But give thought to

which groups and agencies to consider. Give thought to what each can do.

2. Make an appointment first, especially if the organization has a State office with an executive administrator.

3. Present your facts and desires specifically. Talk frankly and above board. Talk sense. You will find the State officials of these rural organizations and agencies glad to listen to reason, but they will appreciate your coming to your points simply and soon.

4. Show some knowledge of the organization you are talking to.

For one thing, this will help you to talk in rather concrete terms about how his organization can help you and how you can fit into their procedures. For example, you can see how it would be to your advantage, when talking to the agricultural extension director, to give some indication that you know about home demonstration clubs and county councils, or when talking with the State supervisors of vocational agriculture that you know there is such an organization as the FFA.

Organization heads will appreciate your having known enough about their organization to have invited them to help you, but they will also appreciate your letting them explain more about themselves to you. Let the other fellow have some opportunity to express pride. Don't know so much about them that it appears you are trying to tell them how to run your program in their setup. Let them adapt, but you know enough about them to help them adapt.

5. Have your own program or project divided into several operative parts or phases. These will provide handles which groups can see to take hold of or specific tasks that they can sink their teeth into. It will also help in developing the program within an organization as some will want to know what to do first or if this would be of any help, although they would not accept the program at all if it is presented as only one big project with many things about it to be done, all or none.

6. Rely on the spirit of cooperation. Also on the other fellow's interest in service and in protection and peace. Most people basically want to be cooperative and helpful to other worthwhile causes.

7. Express appreciation and recognition of the place of the organization in State rural life and of how it can help you, help Civil Defense, and help rural people of the State. Say that you have something that will be of interest to and be a challenge to both their State group and their local leadership. Most organizations are glad to cooperate once they are: (a) convinced of one's sincerity, (b) convinced of the worthwhileness of the project, and (c) convinced that they can help.

8. Respect the factors of time and procedure. Don't expect a State organization to fully accept and initiate your project through its locals the very next day. Organization programs are usually arranged well in advance. In many cases you may find yourself working with them on procedures for getting your project into next year's program rather than this year. Also be alert to adjusting your own procedures and rules to fit rural conditions that may be of controlling importance; don't force them to necessarily do it the way it may be done in cities.

9. Expect to make followup contacts. Do not overurge the other fellow to reach a decision right now. Give time for thought and consideration of others in the group. Offer to explain more fully and perhaps to a larger group of officials, or to speak at a meeting that may be coming up. Initial discussion will open doors to further presentations and activities. This is why it is important to have the project divisible and important to have some understanding of the organization, so that you can help it reach decisions on what it might do next.

You will find State officials of farm organizations and agencies to be kind, cooperative people, but also keen and thoughtful people in their own ways. Most of them will be farmers or who have had lots of farm or small town experience. They will not be magnates of industrial power and authority. They will be protective of their local groups and will be wanting to work out plans with you which will make the project most acceptable and easy for local groups. Expect great variation in how the project will be carried on locally because, as was said before, in most cases local groups have a certain independence within their State and national organizations, and conditions vary locally, too.

Most of all just be human and allow other persons to be likewise. Appreciate the significance of local and State organizations. Appreciate the customs and attitudes of rural life. Have faith in other people - in lay leadership.

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